

December 15, 2006

Dear ExoMars friends,

The EGU in Vienna is coming up once again (Vienna, 15--20 April 2007). As you consider your presentations, we would like to draw your attention to a session that we trust you may find very interesting. Besides oral papers, we also aim to have a sizeable number of good poster presentations. We hope to receive your abstracts in the near future. Many thanks ---Frances, Jan, Christian, and Jorge.

Session title : Astrobiology and Mars

Session coordinators: Frances Westall, Jan Toporski, Christian MÃ¶tller, Jorge Vago

Session description:

Exo/Astrobiology - the study of the origins, early evolution, distribution and destiny of life - is a multidisciplinary science which encompasses, amongst others, the disciplines of chemistry, biology, geology, paleontology, atmospheric physics, planetary sciences, astronomy and astrophysics. With the wealth of new information arriving from surface and orbital missions, there is plenty of fuel to fire our imaginations regarding the search for traces of past or present life on Mars. We therefore invite papers for this session on all aspects of astrobiology, especially those having particular relevance for upcoming and planned Mars missions, such as the European ExoMars mission (2013) and NASA's Astrobiology Field Laboratory (AFL-possibly in 2016).

The goals of ExoMars include the search for traces of present and past life in the shallow subsurface and within surface rocks, as well as understanding the potential habitability of the sites the Rover will visit. ExoMars may also include an Orbiter with remote science capability. AFL is under consideration within NASA's Mars Exploration Program.

Papers covering aspects of analytical instrumentation for Mars exploration, testing of such instruments in the laboratory and field, laboratory and/or space experimentation, as well as contributions that deal with issues related to planetary protection and spacecraft sterilization procedures are encouraged. Also, papers regarding orbital science of exobiological relevance, which may complement the results obtained by landed missions, and papers addressing suitable landing sites or geological environments for search-for-life missions are welcome in this session. With this scheme we hope to facilitate the exchange of latest knowledge on research and development regarding astrobiology exploration of Mars, as well as to stimulate discussion on future planetary exploration strategies including manned missions.

EGU Link:

<http://meetings.copernicus.org/egu2007/>

Abstract deadline 15 January 2007.